

Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment
Committee Report

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March 31, 2004

The Honorable Haunani Apoliona, Chairperson
Board of Trustees
Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Madame Chair,

Your Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment, having met on March 31, 2004 and after full and free discussion, recommends approval of the following action:

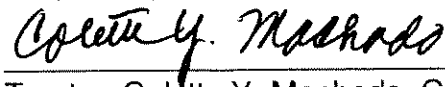
Be it moved that, because statistics indicate that Hawaiian children have consistently been shown to have, over decades, the lowest test scores and graduation rates, and are overrepresented in special education and because Hawaiian students also have disproportionately higher rates of grade retention and absenteeism than do non-Hawaiian students, and in an effort to provide greater educational opportunities to Native Hawaiian children throughout the State of Hawaii and to provide local control of schools that will guarantee Hawaiian students of accountability by educational policy makers and practitioners that will assure a greater chance for educational success by Hawaiian students, the Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs supports the reform of our public education system which would replace the existing department and board of education with at least seven (7) elected local school boards. Further, the Trustees support the idea that this question of educational reform be posed to the community through an amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution."

On March 31, 2004 the BAE Committee was offered a presentation by the Citizens Achieving Reform in Education. Additional testimony was given by beneficiaries representing the IMUA Group requesting OHA's support for educational reform. Discussions centered around statistics that report native Hawaiian children and rural neighbor island schools are not receiving the type of services needed and community involvement currently offered by the State of Hawaii public school system.

After full discussion supported by the CARE Report dated December 15, 2003 and the PASE Left Behind Report by the Kamehameha Schools, the committee unanimously agreed that there is a need for OHA to take action to support education reform.

The approved roll call vote sheet is attached for your reference.

Respectfully submitted:



Trustee Colette Y. Machado, Chairperson



Trustee John Waihee IV, Vice-Chair